



Higher National Unit specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology

Unit code: F56V 35

Unit purpose: This Unit is designed for candidates to develop their ability to use sociological theories and perspectives in their specific professional role. This Unit also looks at the skills and knowledge of research and evidence based practice. To enable candidates to complete this Unit they should be employed in an appropriate job role, in a placement setting or have relevant and recent experience of an appropriate sector.

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- ◆ apply appropriate research methods and evidence an ability to maintain and develop a knowledge base
- ◆ evidence an understanding of relevant and current sociological theories
- ◆ apply sociological knowledge to practice

Credit points and level: 1 HN credit at SCQF level 8: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: It is recommended that candidates have completed another Social Science Unit based on Sociological theory at an appropriate level to ensure they have the underpinning knowledge to work at SCQF level 8. This may include sociology based Units from the HNC Social Care, HNC Early Education and Childcare, HNC Health Care, SVQ in Health and Social Care or SVQ CCLD level 3 or predecessor qualifications. Candidates should also have good *Communication, IT, Problem Solving* and *Numeracy* Skills which could be evidenced by the achievement of Core Skills at SCQF level 6 in these areas. Candidates should also have previous or current workplace experience before undertaking this Unit.

Core Skills: There may be opportunities to develop Core Skills and Core Skill components of *Communication* — Oral Communication and Written Communication at SCQF level 6, *Problem Solving* — Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6, *Numeracy* — Using Number and Using Graphical Information at SCQF level 6 and *Information Technology* at SCQF level 6 in the Unit, although there is no automatic certification of these Core Skills or Core Skills components.

General information for centres (cont)

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

If undertaking this Unit as a part of the HND Childhood Practice or HND Social Services, it is recommended that this Unit is taught at the start of the course.

It is recommended that this Unit be delivered simultaneously with the *Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology Unit* (F56T 35). This Unit shares the first Outcome (research) with the *Applied Psychology Unit*, within the HND Childhood Practice and HND Social Services. Delivery of these Outcomes can be simultaneous and should afford considerable time for the acquisition of the requisite depth and breadth of knowledge.

Assessment: It is expected that this Unit will be undertaken as part of an integrated award and that delivery and assessment will be carried out in a manner which is integrated with other relevant Units. Guidance on the integrated delivery and assessment for the Group Awards that this Unit forms can be found in the respective Arrangement documents.

If delivered on a standalone basis the Outcomes within this Unit could be assessed holistically by a single instrument of assessment that requires the candidate to produce a report that links theories to their workplace experience or a case study (if appropriate). If need be, it would also be possible to break this report down into three individual reports that assess each Outcome separately. In the rare occasion where a candidate cannot access sufficient relevant experience to undertake a report on actual practice, a case study which would elicit this knowledge may be devised.

Should it be necessary to assess learning from this Unit alone, it would be necessary to do so in a manner which evidences the candidate's application of learning within a real work context in order to make an assessment of actual practice. This might be achieved by a number of different assessment methods, which should contain elements demonstrating how the candidate uses theoretical constructs to inform practice. It should also be verified by a senior practitioner or manager from the candidate's workplace who is familiar with the candidate's practice to ensure authenticity.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology

Unit code: F56V 35

The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Apply appropriate research methods and evidence an ability to maintain and develop a knowledge base

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Priorities for research
- ◆ Methodologies associated with research
- ◆ Ethical considerations
- ◆ Quantitative and Qualitative data
- ◆ Statistics and methods of data presentation
- ◆ Primary and secondary sources of research
- ◆ Research findings and practice wisdom

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ establish research priorities
- ◆ critically analyse and evaluate a minimum of four theories and data contributing to the research
- ◆ evaluate the impact of ethical considerations and professional values on any intervention based on research
- ◆ demonstrate how data can be processed to produce meaningful information by presenting findings from four pieces of research (qualitative and quantitative)
- ◆ demonstrate familiarity with sources of research evidence eg web, library, professional associations, journals by evidencing use of at least four sources
- ◆ demonstrate an ability to identify relevant sources of information and their potential for informing practice by the identification of at least four relevant sources
- ◆ demonstrate an ability to share knowledge and learn from others showing the use of the data from one relevant source translating to practice

Assessment Guidelines

It is recommended that this Outcome be assessed in an integrated fashion along with related Outcomes from this and other Units from the Group Award in which it belongs, eg HND Childhood Practice or HND Social Services. Please see guidance on integrated and holistic approaches to assessment contained within the Arrangements Documents for each respective Group Award.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology

If undertaking this Unit on a standalone basis this Outcome could be assessed holistically with Outcomes 2 and 3 as part of a single assessment for the Unit with a report on a piece of actual practice of around 2,500 words. The report should evidence a minimum of four theories correctly applied to the candidate's setting.

Alternatively, this Outcome could be assessed separately with a 1,000 word report evidencing the above requirements. In the rare occasion where a candidate cannot access sufficient relevant experience to undertake a report on actual practice a case study which would elicit this knowledge may be devised.

Outcome 2

Evidence an understanding of relevant and current sociological theories

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Current issues, trends and paradigms in sociology with appreciation of theory, evidence and relevance to current debates
- ◆ Current and relevant sociological theories/perspectives from infancy to old age
- ◆ Nature and the effects of developmental delay, disruption and trauma with regards to mental health issues on the individual
- ◆ Learning styles, multiple intelligences and positive environments/cultures linked to anticipated developments

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ evaluate the role of environment in human development
- ◆ evaluate key elements of five of the main domains of sociological theory
- ◆ identify and explain four key theories/perspectives regarding human growth, development and learning
- ◆ evaluate three contemporary perspectives on mental health

Assessment Guidelines

It is recommended that this Outcome be assessed in an integrated fashion along with related Outcomes from this and other Units from the Group Award in which it belongs, eg HND Childhood Practice or HND Social Services. Please see guidance on integrated and holistic approaches to assessment contained within the Arrangements Documents for each respective Group Award.

If undertaking this Unit on a standalone basis this Outcome could be assessed holistically with Outcomes 1 and 3 as part of a single assessment for the Unit with a report on a piece of actual practice of around 2,500 words. The report should evidence a minimum of four theories correctly applied to the candidate's professional practice.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology

Alternatively, this Outcome could be assessed separately with a 1,000 word report, which should contain a literature review and a justification of the sociological theories used based on available data. This should underpin the use of a minimum of two of the theories contained in the report and conform to the Evidence Requirements. In the rare occasion where a candidate cannot access sufficient relevant experience to undertake a report on actual practice a case study which would elicit this knowledge may be devised.

Outcome 3

Apply sociological knowledge to practice

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Evidence-based practice
- ◆ Sociological theories/perspectives within a professional context
- ◆ Strategies/approaches/programmes based on appropriate theoretical approaches
- ◆ Professional practice strategies and their effectiveness
- ◆ Commonly used models of practice

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain the concept of evidence-based practice within professional practice
- ◆ apply and evaluate a minimum of two relevant sociological theories/perspectives to practice within professional context
- ◆ critically evaluate the use of sociological theory to practice

Assessment Guidelines

It is recommended that this Outcome be assessed in an integrated fashion along with related Outcomes from this and other Units from the Group Award in which it belongs, eg HND Childhood Practice or HND Social Services. Please see guidance on integrated and holistic approaches to assessment contained within the Arrangements Documents for each respective Group Award.

If undertaking this Unit on a standalone basis this Outcome could be assessed holistically with Outcomes 1 and 2 as part of a single assessment for the Unit with a report on a piece of actual practice of around 2,500 words. The report should evidence a minimum of four theories correctly applied to the subject's setting.

This Outcome should be assessed through the evaluation of the effectiveness of two of the theories contained in the report.

Alternatively, this Outcome could be assessed separately with a 1,000 word report evidencing the above requirements. In the rare occasion where a candidate cannot access sufficient relevant experience to undertake a report on actual practice a case study which would elicit this knowledge may be devised.

Administrative Information

Unit code: F56V 35

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology

Superclass category: EE

Original date of publication: August 2008

Version: 01

History of changes:

Version	Description of change	Date

Source: SQA

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2009

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

SQA acknowledges the valuable contribution that Scotland's colleges have made to the development of Higher National qualifications.

Additional copies of this Unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Customer Contact Centre for further details, telephone 0845 279 1000.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is designed to enable students to explore how sociological theory influences childhood practice and social services. It will examine essential knowledge for application across a number of contexts. The Unit also seeks to give the candidate the knowledge and skills to be evidence based in their practice and have the ability to carry out research to evaluate existing or design future work. The Outcomes may be presented in sequence or integrated.

Many candidates will have completed a sociological Unit at level 7. It should however not be presumed that this is the case for all candidates as there will be entrants via Health, Social Care and Early Education and Childcare and as such all will have varying degrees of knowledge.

Outcome 1

This Outcome is shared with Outcome 1 in the *Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology* Unit therefore delivery can be simultaneous and should allow considerable time for the acquisition of the requisite depth and breadth of knowledge.

Candidates should be provided with opportunities to use a variety of research methods both primary and secondary and evaluate such data. There should be opportunities for candidates to examine and analyse both Quantitative and Qualitative research methods. Candidates should have opportunities to use Athens as a method of sourcing relevant Sociological literature. Candidates should also be aware of software programmes such as SPSS (a data mining/analysis software). There should also be opportunities to analyse and synthesis sociological literature and reviews. Candidates should be made aware of the ethics of sociological research. This work can be linked to Outcome 1 in researching current theories and theorists.

Outcome 2

Candidates should have the opportunity to explore, analyse and evaluate a range of sociological theories issues and perspectives which influence current care and early years practice across a number of contexts.

Below are some suggested sociological theories/perspectives for exploration. These suggestions are not exhaustive and choices should reflect current thinking at the time of delivery.

- ◆ positivism, Symbolic Interactionist, Functional Analysis, Conflict theory (micro sociological and macro sociological perspectives), Cultural Relativism, Socialisation and Ethnomethodology
- ◆ macro sociology such as Structuralism, Positivism, conflict and consensus perspectives such as humanist Marxism and structural Marxism and functionalism
- ◆ micro sociology such as social action, phenomenology, symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology
- ◆ structuralisms is the relationship between the individual and society

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology

Some of the areas that could be looked at in relation to the above perspectives are: deviance, crime, poverty, childhood, education, abuse, crime, drug and alcohol misuse, discrimination, homelessness, class, gender, race, age, disability, sexual identity, language, religion or sect, mental health and mental health status, family, state, media, the law, socialisation, marginalisation, medicalisation, power and authority, culture, identity and meaning.

With regards to theorists and Sociologists it is recommended that candidates who complete this Unit have a basic working knowledge of the classical theorists' ie Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Max Weber, Karl Max, Emile Durkheim and Harriet Martineau.

However the main emphasis will need to be on contemporary ideas and theorists/sociologists. Some suggestions are provided below:

C Wright Mills, Talcott Parsons, Niklas Luhmann, William Julius Wilson, Jargen Habermas, Anthony Giddens, Margaret Archer, Pierre Broudie, Basil Bernstein, Robert Merton, Ralf Daherhdorf Randall Collins, George Ritzer, Charles Horton Cooley (looking glass), George Herbert Mead, Irving Goffman (presentation of self), Jean Baudrillars, Carol Gilligan, Howard Gardner, Ann Oakley and Michael Foucault.

The suggestions are not exhaustive and choices should reflect current thinking at the time of delivery. Lecturers will have to define the areas of priority and lead the course relevant to the group of candidates and workplace opportunities.

Outcome 3

Candidates could examine and explore the concept of evidence based practice. Outcomes 1 and 2 provide the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills of an evidence base to inform professional practice and research methods to apply to professional practice. Outcome 3 builds on this by providing opportunities to develop analytical skills to assess need and resources, and to evaluate strategies to meet the need.

Candidates should be given opportunities and material to link Sociological theory to practice and examine a wide variety of strategies, local, national and international. Candidates should be encouraged to examine strategies used in the workplace and evaluate the effectiveness of such strategies.

Some examples are given below and are not exhaustive or prescriptive and would depend very much on the time of delivery and work experiences of candidates:

HND Childhood Practice — Educational Strategies/Initiatives: Curriculum for Excellence, Early Years and Early Intervention Framework, Hungry for Success, Inclusiveness National Strategy for Sport, Lifelong Learning, Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities, Community Schools, Getting it Right for Every Child, Determined to Succeed, Ambitious, Excellent Schools, Respect and Responsibility the National Strategy and Action Plan for Improving Sexual Health in Scotland. There may be also local strategies implemented which candidates could also look at.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology

HND Social Services — Social Strategies/Initiatives: Child Protection strategies, Child Care strategies, A National Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent Suicide in Scotland, National Youth Strategy, Changing Lives Communication Strategy, Strategies for Carers, National Strategy for the Development of the Social Service Workforce in Scotland, A Social Enterprise Strategy for Scotland, Mental Health Strategies, National Fostering Strategy, Community Care, A Safer Scotland and Offending Strategies. There may also be local strategies which candidates could also look at.

There are an increasing number of social service projects that incorporate both a health and social care approach. The inclusion of Health Strategies may be helpful and include: Exploiting the Power of Knowledge in the National Health Service, Sexual Health Strategy, National Child Health Strategies, Food and Health Strategies, Mental Health Strategies, Strategy for Carers, Ageing Population Strategies, National Strategy for Sport and the Anti Smoking Strategy. There may also be local strategies which candidates could also look at.

The above lists are not prescriptive or exhaustive and would need to reflect current thinking and issues.

Useful Sources

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/Outcomes/>

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/aboutlts/index.asp>

<http://www.sssc.uk.com/Homepage.htm>

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Home>

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/http://>

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/childrensservices/girfec/Background

<http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk/>

<http://faculty.pepperdine.edu/rperrin/courses/soc200/200powerpointindex.htm>

<http://cawley-classroom.wikispaces.com/Sociology+Powerpoints>

<http://www.barrycomp.com/bhs/new0904.html>

Publications and Reading Materials

Suicide by Emile Durkheim, edited by George Simpson and John Spaulding, 1952

The presentation of self in everyday life, Erving Goffman, Penguin, 1990

Sociology, Giddens A, 5th Edition, Polity Press, 2006

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology

Classic and contemporary readings in sociology: Editor: Ian Marsh Rosie Campbell Mike Keating
Editor: Prentice Hall binding

Environmental Sociology: A Social Constructionist Perspective, John A. Hannigan, London and New York: Routledge, 1995

Black Feminist Thought, Collins, P.H., Routledge 1990

Liberating Method, DeVault, M., Temple Press US, 1999

Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History, Gluck, Shana Berger & Daphne Patai. NY: Routledge, 1991

Whose Science/Whose Knowledge, Harding, S, Cornell University Press, 1991

Feminism & Method: Ethnography, Discourse Analysis and Activist Research Naples, Nancy, Routledge, 2003

Fraser, N. & L.G. (1994) 'A Genealogy of Dependency: Tracing a Keyword of the U.S. Welfare State.' *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 19(21)

Biographical Dictionary of Sociologists, William Stewart, published by Publisher: McFarland & Co Inc, May 2008

Key Sociological Thinkers, editor Rob Stones, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007

Introducing Post Modernism: Richard Appignanesi, Icon Books

British Social Attitudes: Editor: Alison Park, Publisher: Sage Publications Ltd Binding: Hardback

Possible Links to Other Units in HND Childhood Practice and HND Social Services

This Unit is linked to the following Units in the Group Awards HND Childhood Practice and HND Social Services:

- ◆ Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology
- ◆ Childhood Practice and Social Services: Professional Development and Practice
- ◆ Childhood Practice and Social Services: Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation of Practice

Possible Links to Other Units in other Group Awards

This Unit may link to the PDA Childhood Practice at SCQF level 8.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit forms part of the mandatory section of the HND Childhood Practice and the HND Social Services. However, it can also be delivered as a stand alone Unit.

It is recommended that this Unit be delivered simultaneously with the *Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Psychology* Unit (F56T 35).

To lessen assessment burden for candidates it is recommended that a holistic approach to assessment and delivery should be undertaken.

Alternatively each individual learning Outcome for this Unit can be assessed separately by means of a report or a case study (if appropriate). A case study would only be considered on the rare occasion where the candidate could not generate sufficient relevant examples from their own practice.

In order to achieve this Unit, candidates are required to present sufficient evidence that they have met all the knowledge and skills requirements for each Outcome.

At the risk of over egging the point any research should be carried out within the ethical guidelines for research and should not conflict with the values of the candidate's professional field.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

There may be opportunities to develop Core Skills and Core Skill components of *Communication* — Oral Communication and Written Communication at SCQF level 6, *Problem Solving* — Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6, *Numeracy* — Using Number and Using Graphical Information at SCQF level 6 and *Information Technology* at SCQF level 6 in the Unit, although there is no automatic certification of these Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Communication: This will be developed by the completion of the assessment requirements for this Unit.

Problem Solving: This could be developed by evaluating different approaches and making informed choices as to the appropriate application.

Numeracy: This could be developed by working with raw data to produce statistical information which can inform practice decisions.

Information Technology: This could be developed by the use of ICT sources to access research data.

Open learning

This Unit is suitable for Open Learning, provided there is authentication of the candidate's evidence. However it would require planning by the centre to ensure the sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence. Arrangements would have to be made to ensure that assessment of Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 is assessed by an appropriate supervisor.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology

Candidates with disabilities and/or additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).

General information for candidates

Unit title: Childhood Practice and Social Services: Applied Sociology

This Unit is designed to enable you to gain an understanding of Sociological theories/perspectives that informs practice in the Childhood Practice and Social Services sectors. It is primarily intended to prepare you for working in the Childhood Practice or the Social Services sectors and to give you an insight into how Sociological theories impact on strategies and approaches currently applied in practice.

The Unit has three main areas, each the subject of a separate Outcome. To begin with, you will examine literature that has been written and undertake research and critically analyse relevant literature sources and gain an understanding of qualitative and quantitative data. You will then look at different current Sociological theories/perspectives that have affected humans ranging from infancy to old age. You will be asked to make links to practice and analyse how these theories/perspectives have influenced our understating in working with both individuals and groups. You will examine and evaluate such data and relate to strategies you have planned, implemented and evaluated in practice or through simulated material.

Overall you will be expected to use the Knowledge and Skills from this Unit to enhance and understand your practice with individuals and groups in Childhood Practice or Social Services.

You may have opportunities to develop Core Skills and Core Skill components of *Communication* — Oral Communication and Written Communication at SCQF level 6, *Problem Solving* — Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6, *Numeracy* — Using Number and Using Graphical Information at SCQF level 6 and *Information Technology* at SCQF level 6 in the Unit, although there is no automatic certification of these Core Skills or Core Skills components.

You will draw upon your current workplace or past work experience within either a Childhood Practice or Social Services setting while undertaking this Unit, which will allow you to reflect upon your practice.

You may find that the assessment of this Unit may be integrated with other related Units from the HND Childhood Practice or HND Social Services Group Awards. Alternatively, the Unit may be assessed on a stand alone basis. Assessments methods will be decided by your lecturer, following SQA guidance.